

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

AID-20 OMB-01 OPR-02 SY-10 M-03 A-01 OC-06 CCO-00

RSR-01 /126 W

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R 261959 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8562

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY NPORT OF SPAIN

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GEORGETOWN 0947

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GY

SUBJECT: GUYANA ELECTIONS-- PRIME MINISTER CALLS FOR CALM
AND RESTRAINT

REF: GEORGETOWN 0940

1. SUMMARY: IN RADIO BROADCAST LAST NIGHT PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM SOUGHT TOPROMOTE CALM IN THEMIDST OF RUMORS OF RACIAL DISTURBANCES. PM COMMENTED ON DISRUPTION OF CAMPAIGN RALLY AND ALLEGEDLY UNRELATED DEATHS OF TWO SOLDIERS WHICH TOUCHED OFF SERIES OF INCIDENTS NOW UNDER INVESTIGATION. BURNHAM WARNED AGAINST SPIRAL OF VIOLENCE AND PROMISED TO USE THE FULL WEIGHT OF SECURITY FORCES TO ENSURE ORDER DURING ELECTION PERIOD. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM ADDRESSED GUYANESE PEOPLE IN RADIO BROADCAST LAST NIGHT IN EFFORT TO CHECK RUMORS AND EXAGGERATED REPORTS OF RACIAL VIOLENCE AT ENMORE AND ALONG EAST COAST ROAD
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SUNDAY NIGHT (REFTEL). IN CALM AND REASSURING TONE BURNHAM BEGAN BY REMARKING THAT GENERAL ELECTION IS TIME OF KEEN RIVARLY, BUT IN EVERY DEMOCRACY, ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN MUST BE TIME OF PEACE NOT CONFLICT. PM STATED THAT FOR GUYANA THERE IS NO OTHER WAY. ALL COMMITTED TO MAINTENANANCE OF DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIC PROCESS OF FREE ELECTIONS.

3. BURNHAM NOTED THAT LAST EIGHT YEARS OF CALM AND HIS GOVERNMENT' S WISH FOR PEACE HAD PERHAPS BEEN VIEWED BY ENEMIES OF FREEDOM AS EVIDENCE OF WEAKNESS. HE CALLED ATTENTION INPARTICULAR TO EVENTS OF PAST TWENTY- FOUR HOURS IN WHICH SIGNS OF CERTED EFFORT TO DISTURB PEACE AND REVIVE PAST DIVSIONS HAVE BEEN VISIBLE. PM WARNED THAT CYCLE OF ATTACK AND COUNTER- ATTACK MUST NOT BEGIN.

4. BURNHAM WENT ON TO DESCRIBE INCIDENTS OF SUNDAY NIGHT ALONG THE COAST ROAD. HE SAID THAT AT ENMORE POLITICAL MEETING(PNC) HAD BEEN BROKEN UP BY SYSTEMATIC PROGRAM OF VIOLENCE. AFTERWARDS DEMONSTRATORS WANDERED ONTO ROADNAND BROKE CAR WINDOWS. UNCONNECTED WITH THIS INCIDENT, THE PM STATED, WERE DEATHS OF TWO GUYANA DEFENSE FORCE SOLDIERS IN MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENT. HOWEVER, THIS TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCE WAS SEIZED AND MADE INTO OCCASION FOR HEIGHTENING TENSION. BURNHAM STATED THAT FURTHER INCIDENTS UNDER INVESTIGATION INCLUDING MURDER OF (EAST INDIAN) FISHERMAN. HE CONDEMNED INCITEMENT TO VIOLENCE AND VIOLENT ACTIONS, WHATEVER THE MOTIVATION, AS WORK OF ENEMIES OF SOCIETY.

5. PM CALLED FOR HELP OF MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY AND OTHER PARTIES, LABOR UNIONS AND OTHER GROUPS IN PROMOTING PEACE. HEN AFFIRMED ELECTION WOULD NOT BE POSTPONED AND WARNED THAT FULL WEIGHT OF SECUTY FORCES AND LAW WOULD BE BROUGHT AGAINST THOSE INDULGING IN VIOLENCE. HE CONCLUDED BY ASKING EACH GUYANESE TO BE HIS BROTHER' S KEEPER IN DAYS AHEAD.

5. COMMENT: BURNHAM' S BROADCAST AIMED AT CALMING DEVELOPING MOOD OF FEAR AND CHECKING WIDLY CIRCULATING RUMORS. HIS TONE WAS ONE OF PATERNAL SINCERITY AND NON- PARTISANSHIP. THERE WAS SOME DISTORTION OF FACT, E. G. DEATHS OF GDF SOLDIERS ACTUALLY WERE CONNECTED WITH ENMORE INCIDENT(REFTEL). MANY EAST INDIANS QUESTION BURNHAM AS DEFENDER OF FREE ELECTIONS AS THEY BELIEVE BURNHAM RESPONSIBLE FOR RIGGING 1968
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ELECTION AND FEAR SAME THING WILL OCCUR AGAIN JULY16. EAST INDIANS MAY ALSO VIEW ASSURANCES OF USE OF SECURITY FORCES, COMPOSED ALMOST ENTIRELY OF AFRO- GUYANESE, WITH SUSPICION. NET EFFECT OF DISTURBANCES ALONG COAST ROAD AND RUMORS ABOUT THEM HAS BEEN TO PUSH RACE ISSUE TO FRONT OF ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN BY EVOKING MEMORIES OF PAST CONFLICTS BETWEEN EAST INDIANS AND AFRO- GUAYANESE. KING

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